

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5898

As Passed Senate, March 16, 2005

Title: An act relating to postpartum depression.

Brief Description: Ordering a public information campaign on postpartum depression.

Sponsors: Senators Regala, Brandland, Pridemore, Hargrove, Thibaudeau, Oke, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/2/05 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/16/05, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Thibaudeau, Vice Chair; Deccio, Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Kastama, Kline and Poulsen.

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: Postpartum depression is a serious condition that affects women of all ages, economic status, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. It includes a range of physical and emotional changes that many mothers can have after the birth of a child, which can be treated with medication and counseling. If untreated, however, postpartum depression can lead to, among other things, further depression, self-destructive behavior, neglect of the infant or other siblings, or even suicide.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists estimates that about ten percent of new mothers experience postpartum depression.

Summary of Bill: The Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect must conduct a public information and outreach campaign about the significance, signs, and treatment of postpartum depression. The campaign may, within available funds, include production and distribution of a brochure and communication by electronic media, telephone hotlines, and existing parenting education events that are funded by the Council.

Appropriation: \$25,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Babies are harmed by mothers who are depressed; there is a link between maternal depression and infant neglect. Parent education and awareness on postpartum

depression should be supported. Helping parents learn how to deal with postpartum depression could ultimately reduce costs for the state in terms of juvenile incarceration and education costs, for example. The entity charged with carrying out the information and outreach campaign fully supports this bill.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Thomas Soukakos; Sheri Hill, Center on Infant Mental Health and Development; Cheryl Murfin Bond, Children's Home Society; Merrie Lynn Rice, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department; Kristen Rogers, Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Linda Mason Wilgis, Office of the Children and Family Ombudsman.

House Amendment(s): The appropriation for the public information campaign is made to the Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect instead of the children's trust fund.

Passed House: 95-1.